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DEPT FOR DRL/PHD CUMBERLAND

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [BO](#)
SUBJECT: HRDF POLLING SUCCESSFUL, LEAFLETS SEIZED

REF: A. 05 MINSK 591
[1](#)B. MINSK 286

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador George Krol for Reasons 1.4(B,D
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[1](#)1. (C) This is the second report on implementation of a DRL grant to provide independent opinion polling in Belarus. Under the auspices of a DRL Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF) small grant (ref A), the IISEPS polling service conducted the third of six opinion polls in late March/early April (polling results septel). IISEPS conducted the first such poll in early December and the second in February. IISEPS' head Oleg Manaev reported his organization experienced fewer problems from authorities in conducting this poll, compared to those faced in the earlier polls. He attributed this positive change to authorities relaxing after the March 19 election. Unlike the earlier polls, this time IISEPS issued a press release announcing the polls' main findings, namely that the regime likely inflated Lukashenko's true support by 20% through electoral falsification. Manaev did not know what sort of consequences this would lead to with the regime. (Note: IISEPS was closed by the Supreme Court in April 2005 and o
pinion polling is now strictly controlled by the GOB.)

[1](#)2. (C) As a corollary to the HRDF grant, the Czech government gave USD 18,000 to the Vyasna human rights NGO to distribute these polling results. Vyasna reported that the BKGB immediately seized 30,000 of the 100,000 broadsheet leaflets they printed for distribution. Vyasna succeeded in distributing the other 70,000 leaflets between March 12 and 18, immediately before the election, in eight cities across Belarus.
Krol